

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAM-01 SAB-01 IO-10 NEAE-00 EB-07 TRSE-00

OMB-01 /096 W

----- 129394

O P 061335Z SEP 75

FM USINT BAGHDAD

TO AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2329

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 0928

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IZ, FR

SUBJ: SADDAM HUSSEIN IN FRANCE

REF: A. BAGHDAD 415 (NOTAL)

B. BAGHDAD 461 (NOTAL)

C. BAGHDAD 501 (NOTAL)

D. BAGHDAD 742

1. SUMMARY: A LEAN, REFRESHED SADDAM HUSSEIN RETURNED VIGOROUSLY, ON SEPT 5TH, TO INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL, AFTER LONG PERIOD OF LOW PROFILE AND BEHIND THE SCENES AGUIVITY. DESPITE
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CURRENT BACKGROUND OF STRIDENT ANTI-US, ANTI-SYRIAN AND EVEN

ANTI-EGYPTIAN IDEOLOGICAL PROGRANDA, THE RCC VICE-CHAIRMAN APPEARS READY TO TAKE UP THE REINS ONCE AGAIN IN MASTERMINDING GOI'S PRAGMATIC OPENING TO THE WEST. END SUMMARY.

2. RCC VICE CHAIRMAN SADDAM HUSSEIN'S CURRENT VISIT TO PARIS PUTS EMPHATIC END TO PERIOD WHICH BEGAN LAST MAY WHEN SADDAM SUDDENLY ASSUMED LOW PROFILE POSTURE VIS-A-VIS PRAGMATIC OPENING TO WEST WHICH HAD BEGUN AFTER 1973 SETTLEMENT WITH INTERNATIONAL OIL FIRMS. THE LOW PROFILE (REPORTED AND ANALYZED REF D) WAS APPARENTLY DEEMED PRUDENT BY SADDAM BECAUSE OF GREATER THAN ANTICIPATED DOMESTIC OPPOSITION TO HIM NON-DOCTRINAIRE APPROACH TO THE WEST, AS SYMBOLIZED BY HIS JANUARY 1975 MEETING WITH DAVID ROCKEFELLER AND BY PRESIDENT BAKR'S LATER MEETING WITH SENATORS KENNEDY AND FULBRIGHT.

3. IN THE PAST TEN DAYS IRAQI NEWS MEDIA HAVE CONTAINED MORE THAN ENOUGH ANTI-US PROPAGANDA AND AMPLE IDEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE SHORTCOMINGS OF EGYPT AND SYRIA TO MAKE IT APPEAR THAT SADDAM IS NOT PLAYING FAST AND LOOSE WITH RADICAL BAATH PARTY HOLY WRIT--THUS MAKING IT EASIER TO RESUME POLICY OF OPENING TO WEST.

4. AFTER SOME WEEKS OF NOTABLY SPARSE MEDIA ATTENTION TO HIM, SADDAM HUSSEIN BEGAN TO MOVE BACK TO STAGE CENTER IN AUGUST--MEETING INTER ALIOS WITH A WEST GERMAN ECONOMIC DELEGATION AND RESUMING HIS UNINTERRUPTED ROUND OF CALLS ON MINISTRIES TO DELIVER PEP-TALKS AND GUIDANCE.

5. HE APPEARS FIT, LOOKS PERHAPS TEN POUNDS LIGHTER THAN LAST MAY AND DIPLOMATS WHO CLAIM TO KNOW HIS PHYSICIANS, SAY THAT HIS SLIPPED DISC PROBLEM HAS AT LEAST TEMPORILY ABATED.

6. IF THE CURRENT VISIT SIGNALS OPENING OF NEW PERIOD OF OVERTURES TO THE WEST, FRANCE IS THE SAFEST NATION IN WHICH HE CAN TEST THE WATERS OF IRAQI DOMESTIC REACTION. LONG HELD UP BY THE GOI AS A MODEL TO OTHER CAPITALIST COUNTRIES ON HOW TO CONDUCT RELATIONS WITH IRAQ, FRANCE WAS RECENTLY PRAISED BY SADDAM IN A PARIS-MATCH INTERVIEW AS BLESSED WITH LEADERS NOTABLE FOR THEIR QUOTE FRANKNESS AND TRUTHFULNESS. THIS IS IMPORTANT TO US REGARDLESS OF THE DEGREE OF IDENTITY OR DIFFER-CONFIDENTIAL

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ENCE IN OUR VIEWPOINOE. UNQUOTE. HE ADDED THAT QUOTE IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT WE ARE GOING TO TALK ABOUT (PALESTINE) IN PARIS. UNQUOTE. HE DESCRIBED THE PALESTINE ISSUE AS QUOTE THE CORNERSTONE IN OUR NATIONALIST STRUGGLE AND IN OUR RELATIONS WITH FRIENDS. UNQUOTE.

7. THE DELEGATION ACCOMPANYING THE RCC VICE-CHAIRMAN IS A PRESTIGIOUS ONE WITH HIGH LEVEL REPRESENTATION IN FOREIGN

AFFAIRS, OIL, INDUSTRY, TRANSPORTATION AND THE MILITARY. VISIT COMES AT TIME WHEN FRENCH REPUTATION FOR ABILITY TO PERFORM ON MAJOR PROJECTS IN IRAQ IS BAD. IF NEW PROJECTS ARE GIVEN TO FRANCE ON THIS OCCASION, CURRENT RECORD WOULD ARGUE THAT FRENCH FIRMS WILL ONCE AGAIN BE FORCED TO CALL IN AMERICAN OR OTHER SUB-CONTRACTORS TO DELIVER ON SCHEDULE.

8. NO RPT NO REASON TO BELIEVE FRANCE WILL USE ITS CAREFULLY CULTIVATED LONE-WOLF QUOTE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP UNQUOTE REF A TO ATTEMPT IMPROVE STANDING WITH IRAQ OF ITS PARTNERS IN EEC OR OF USA. GOF, EVEN IF IT WISHES TO PLAY A MODERATING ROLE VIS-A-VIS PALESTINIANS AND ISRAEL, PROBABLY HESITATES TO PUSH ITS LUCK OR DIMINISH ITS CREDIBILITY WITH IRAQ.

9. IRAQI MEDIA OF SEPTEMBER 5TH AND 6TH GAVE MASSIVE TREATMENT TO FRENCH RECEPTION FOR SADDAM ON AFTERNOON OF 5TH AND UNDERLINED THE IMPORTANTANCE GOF OBVIOUSLY ATTACHES TO VISIT.
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